

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

I find this very hard to believe. If it had no interference, then what does the flag do? The mandate of the FCC is to keep the airways open and accessible to the public -- not to pave the way for commercial monopolies.

The fact that these images are digital has little effect on whether these images are pirated or not. I believe very strongly that such a flag serves little means to prevent piracy and are being proposed, as so many recent changes in FCC policy, for the further commercial control of public airways. These measures are NOT in the public interest, but are in fact counter to it.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

My response is simply that such a flag can obviously, if used to limit signals going to a consumer, can clearly limit (if engineered to do so) the flow of signals coming from a consumer. Again -- this is a form of control. It could potentially be used to control access and dissemination of information, limiting the type and quantity of information received or worse yet WHO would have access to this information. Despite the broadcasts claims of privacy control -- they are a commercial industry -- by virtue of their existence -- they have no mandate to provide for the public good. Only to make money. This is NOT in the public interest.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

Again -- under the right conditions -- a consortium of business, as has been evident particularly in the computer and internet industry already, could conspire to control broadcast content and require consumers to purchase new equipment in order to access this content. Again -- NOT in the Public Interest

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

Potentially, yes. Although, as history shows -- such a flag may also INCREASE the development of technology and equipment to counteract the flag.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

By creating a "false" demand, companies could control prices and force prices to be much higher than necessary.

Other Comments:

I feel actions of the FCC of the last 20 years have strayed drastically from the Commissions original 1934 mandate. These changes, while under the guise of bringing the commission up to date with today's technologies, have only resulted in allowing large communications companies to build ever larger monopolies on the channels of access to communications. Despite the promises made by the industry and the FCC -- none of these sweeping changes in FCC doctrine have resulted in "better service and lower fees".

Instead, these "advances" have resulted in consumers having fewer choices and smaller companies having fewer opportunities in ownership of networks, etc.

I realize being a politically controlled agency, the FCC is highly unlikely to correct, what in my mind are violations of its own mandate, but -- nonetheless -- the commission's purpose was to regulate and control the communications infrastructure in a fair manner and toward the public good. I believe very strongly that, especially in the last 20 years or so, the FCC has not only failed to meet this mandate, but in fact taken great lengths to do just the opposite. As a taxpayer, a consumer of the communications industry, as well as a producer of broadcast content -- I'm appalled at the commission's record of recent history.